

# The MIGHTY EIGHTH VOICE



SPECIAL OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM EDITION

Vol. III  
Issue 4

8th Air Force  
Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana

May 2003

## QUICK FACTS

**A**s a critical part of the air component attacking the Iraqi regime, the U.S. Air Force has been heavily engaged in combat operations and combat support missions.

Nearly 800 Air Force aircraft of all types have flown missions 24 hours a day across every square foot of Iraq.

In the first 27 days of the operation, airmen:

- Conducted more than 1,500 GPS satellite uploads to provide enhanced GPS accuracies less than four meters for coalition operations.

- Flew more than 24,000 — or 58% — of all coalition sorties.

- Flew nearly 11,450 — or 95% — airlift sorties, moving almost 81,570 short tons of cargo and 91,450 passengers.

- Flew more than 9,700 — 66% — of all refueling sorties.

- Flew nearly 275 — 86% — of all combat search and rescue sorties.

- Flew nearly 840 — one-third — of all command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance sorties.

- Flew more than 140 Predator and Global Hawk surveillance, reconnaissance and strike sorties.

- Flew nearly 6,300 — 40% — of all strike and counterair sorties.

- Flew nearly 5,350 — 53% — air and space supremacy sorties

current as of April 23, 2003

Source: Defense Officials



## Inside the CAOC: Weather, air tactics



photo by Royal Air Force Sgt. Gareth Davies

Maj. Chris Holinger tracks an ongoing Operation Southern Watch mission inside the Combined Air Operations Center at a forward-deployed base.

## Planners take full advantage of weather

By Bob Jensen

9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force  
Public Affairs

### OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM—

Students of military strategy are familiar with the phrase “the fog of war” and the tactic of striking on a moonless night.

There are many other ways to use weather to our advantage and work around it to achieve the goals of an operation.

“If we know the airfields in a target area are going to be fogged in bad and we know that generally under those conditions our adversary’s pilots won’t fly,” said Lt. Col. Fred Fahlbusch, the Combined Air Operations Center’s weather cell chief here at a deployed location, “we can give planners the

information that those airfields are not going to be flyable for our enemy and that is a point of advantage to our side.

“We use adverse weather to our advantage because if they can’t fly, then they can’t take off and come at us,” he said.

As the planning process for an air tasking order rolls from the strategy and plans portion to the combat operations portion, weather cell members look at the near-term weather. These weather experts provide information on every aspect of the flying missions for that ATO, which helps decisions about going to a certain target area or skipping it because of potential bad weather.

“We can make recommendations prior to and during execution,” said Fahlbusch. “We sit right next to the chief of combat ops and throughout the entire

• See CAOC, page 6

SPECIAL OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM EDITION



photo by Tech. Sgt. Janice Cannon

B-2 Spirit bombers take off from a forward-deployed location March 21 to fly to an Operation Iraqi Freedom mission.

## Coalition “shock air forces” hit Iraq

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (AFPN)** – Coalition “shock air forces” aircraft flew nearly 1,000 strike sorties March 21, hitting targets intended to end the regime of Saddam Hussein. The strikes marked the beginning of the air campaign portion of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During his first press conference since combat operations began, Gen. Tommy Franks, U.S. Central Command commander, spoke about the coalition “shock air forces” which flew nearly 2,000 sorties. Coalition airpower operations began a few minutes before 9 p.m. local time March 21.

For the first time in combat, only precision-guided munitions were used in an effort to minimize collateral damage while targeting a large number of military sites, according to defense officials. During Desert Storm, less than 10 percent of the munitions used were precision guided.

U.S. Air Force B-1B Lancers, B-2A Spirits, B-52H Stratofortresses, F-117 Nighthawks, F-15E Strike Eagles and F-16 Fighting Falcons, plus Navy F/A-18 Hornets and F-14 Tomcat, Marine AV-8B Harrier



photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor

*B-52 Stratofortress bombers taxi toward takeoff for Operation Iraqi Freedom bombing missions. During the first six days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, coalition air forces flew more than 16,000 sorties and struck several thousand targets.*

and coalition Tornado GR-4, Harrier GR-7 and F/A-18 aircraft flew the strike missions.

Hundreds of Tomahawk land-attack missiles from coalition ships and conventional air-launched cruise missiles were also used in the strikes.

Targets included Iraqi regime leadership, regime command and control, regime security, integrated air defense systems and weapons of mass destruction.

The remaining sorties included intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; close-air support; electronic jamming; air refueling; intra-

and inter-theater airlift; search and rescue; and interdiction.

Sorties were vital to the success of the strike sorties flying into the heart of Iraq’s heavy air defenses, which included anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air-missiles, officials said.

Sorties originated from as far away as Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., the Indian Ocean, and the United Kingdom, as well as being flown from 30 locations throughout the CENTCOM area of responsibility and five Navy aircraft carriers. The B-2s flew the longest missions, lasting approximately

34 hours round-trip.

All coalition air missions are planned and controlled by the Combined Air Operations Center at an air base in Southwest Asia. The center functions as the brain for the entire coalition air campaign. CAOC officials plan, monitor and directs everything that goes into the air campaign, from picking the targets and determining what aircraft and munitions will be used to overcoming Iraqi air defenses and coordinating the flying routes of hundreds of aircraft at any given time.

Nearly 1,700 coalition aircraft and thousands of people are required to fly, maintain and support the missions directed by the CAOC. 🇺🇸

### Useful Links

- ❖ Air Force Link  
[www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil)
- ❖ Operation Iraqi Freedom  
[www.af.mil/news/opscenter](http://www.af.mil/news/opscenter)
- ❖ USCENTCOM homepage  
[www.centcom.mil](http://www.centcom.mil)
- ❖ U.S. Army homepage  
[www.army.mil/operations/oif/index.html](http://www.army.mil/operations/oif/index.html)
- ❖ U.S. Marines homepage  
[www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)
- ❖ U.S. Navy homepage  
[www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil)

## B-52 crews use smart-guided cluster bombs

By Senior Master Sgt. Rick Burnham

Air Force Print News

**WASHINGTON**— Air Force B-52 Stratofortress crews made history April 2 when they dropped six sensor-fused cluster bombs on a column of Iraqi tanks headed south out of Baghdad.

The bombing runs resulted in the de-

struction of the tanks and marked the first time in history that CBU-105 Wind Corrected Munitions Dispensers have been used in combat, officials from the Combined Forces Air Component Command said.

The CBU-105 is a "smart-guided" cluster bomb. It disperses smaller bombs that sense the engine heat from armored vehicles and then fire downward to destroy them. In addition, it is equipped with wind-


compensating technology that steers the munitions to precise targets by compensating for launch conditions, wind and adverse weather.

The historic bombing runs were part of a highly successful period of Operation Iraqi Freedom for coalition aircraft, one that Department of Defense officials lauded during an April 2 press briefing at the Pentagon. Army Maj. Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, vice director of operations for the Joint Staff, said bombing of the Iraqi capital has been astounding, both in its precision and in its overall effect.

"The pounding that Baghdad has taken has been extraordinarily precise in its nature," he said. "It has been nothing like what some people visualize as the destruction of a city. It is focused on regime-oriented targets and very carefully done. So certain things have been pounded, but only those are things that represent regime-oriented targets."

Coalition aircraft flew more than 1,000 sorties over Iraq on April 1, McChrystal said. The focus of air operations was on regime leadership targets, Republican Guard divisions and on countering missile threats, he added. Coalition forces have fired more than 700 cruise missiles and have dropped more than 10,000 precision-guided munitions since Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

Many of the recent missions have concentrated on Iraq's Republican Guard, he said, adding that those missions have made an everlasting impact on the "elite" forces of Saddam Hussein.

"It is somewhat unclear on the battlefield, because there has been reinforcement of the Medina and Baghdad sectors by some additional Republican Guard organizations," he said. "But I would say that the Medina and Baghdad divisions are no longer credible forces." 



U.S. Air Force photo

## Historic bomber package strikes Baghdad

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM** — On March 29, for the first time in military history, multiple B-1 Lancer, B-2 Spirit and B-52 Stratofortress long-range bombers such as the one shown here, targeted the same geographical area at the same time as part of a single strike package. After launching from separate bases, the bombers simultaneously struck leadership and command and control targets of the Iraqi regime in Baghdad using precision munitions.

### The "Mighty Eighth" Voice

Editorial content of The **Mighty Eighth Voice** is edited, prepared and provided by the 8th Air Force Public Affairs office, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. All photographs are official Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated. The contents of The **Mighty Eighth Voice** are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Air Force. The **Mighty Eighth Voice** is a monthly publication. People may submit suggestions for stories by calling Master Sgt. Rick DelaHaya in the Public Affairs Office, room 112, or call ext. 6-2156 or DSN 781-2156.



**Eighth Air Force Commander**  
Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson

**Chief, Public Affairs**  
Capt. Denise Kerr

**Deputy Chief, Public Affairs**  
2nd Lt. Jennifer Ferrau

**Editor**  
Master Sgt. Rick DelaHaya  
NCOIC, Public Affairs



photo by Staff Sgt. Cherie Thurlby  
Senior Airman Tia Schroeder, a still photographer from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., was interviewed recently as part of "MTV Diaries" reality series.

## Deployed 509er featured on MTV reality series

by Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill

405th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

### OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

(AFPN) — A 509th Bomb Wing airman supporting war operations at a forward-deployed location was featured on "MTV Diaries," a reality series that airs weekly on the international music TV channel.

Senior Airman Tia Schroeder, a still photographer with the 405th Expeditionary Communications Squadron did a phone interview with MTV host Gideon on March 20, the night of the first U.S. attacks on Baghdad.

Schroeder was asked questions about her job, how she felt the war with Iraq has affected her and what she thinks of the war protesters.

This is the second time Schroeder has

participated in the show. In December 2001, MTV videographers followed her around Ramstein Air Base, Germany, documenting her life there.

Schroeder, deployed from Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., said that she is not a shy person and that "this opportunity allowed me to say how I actually felt, not only to my co-workers and family, but to the American people, especially the younger people watching MTV.

"Younger people might not be aware of the real facts," she said. "This allows them to see what we are going through as young people too.

"I'm excited to represent the Air Force. I do that anyway by wearing the uniform, but this represents the Air Force in a very public way."

The episode aired March 21 on MTV. 🇺🇸

## B-52 pilot still flying high after 33 years

By Airman 1st Class Alice K. Moore  
40th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

### OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

(AFPN) — During the evacuation of Quang Tri in 1972, 1st Lt. Bill Jankowski, an O2-A pilot, flew out of DaNang Air Base, Vietnam, to find enemy targets and bring air support assistance to South Vietnamese who were resisting North Vietnamese.

After the evacuation was complete, he directed air strikes for the ranger battalion and then had to leave the area because of low fuel.

As he turned to leave, the front engine exploded and he glided his plane near the ranger battalion on the ground. He then jettisoned the door and parachuted out of the burning O-2A.

After spending the night on the ground evading capture, two helicopters arrived to retrieve the downed pilot and some American advisers. Once they were in the air, one of the helicopters was hit by an SA-7, burst into flames and crashed. The

helicopter carrying the lieutenant went into an auto-rotation and began to fly low. It flew right above enemy tanks on the ground and was shot down by machine gunfire, forcing Jankowski and the crew of the chopper to land in a rice paddy. Soon after, another helicopter came to retrieve them. Jankowski left Vietnam and returned home.

Thirty-one years later, Lt. Col. Bill Jankowski, who is now assigned to the 40th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron at a forward-deployed location, is still flying over targets supporting America's ideal of spreading freedom across the globe.

Since 1985, Jankowski has been a



photo by Master Sgt. Timothy E. Lancaster  
Lt. Col. Bill Jankowski, a pilot from the 40th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, talks with his navigator during a recent combat-sortie mission. He is a Reserve technician from the 917th Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

member of the Air Force Reserves and currently is an Air Reserve Technician instructor pilot assigned to the 93rd Bomb Squadron, a unit of the 917th Wing at Barksdale, La. 🇺🇸

## Aerospace Warrior Attitude

**Airman 1st Class Neoklis Martin Jr.**

509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs  
Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

**Years of service:** 1 Year

**Hometown:** Derby, Connecticut

**Family:** April Lee, wife

**Job title:** Staff writer and editor

**Primary duties and responsibilities:** Produce *Whiteman Spirit* base newspaper providing articles, photos and graphic support.

**Most rewarding job aspect:** Being a productive member of the Air Force and telling the Air Force story!

**Goals:** Finish my Bachelors' Degree, pin on master sergeant stripes and open a business with my wife, April.

**Hobbies:** playing and writing music, graphic design, creative writing, landscaping, carpentry, camping and 4-wheeling.

**What motivates your winning attitude:** Pride in my country and to honor my family.

**I'm most proud of:** My decision to serve in the Air Force.

**Favorite aspects of Whiteman:** The people!

# Eighth Air Force Salutes!

## Airman Leadership School graduates

**Congratulations to the following "Mighty Eighth" ALS graduates of Class 03-C**

- Senior Airman Erick Calhoun, 608th Combat Plans Squadron
- Senior Airman Amy Howard, 608th Combat Operations Squadron
- Senior Airman Corey Thedford, 608th Air Communications Squadron

## ACC Award

**Congratulations to the following Air Combat Command award winner!**

*Air Combat Command recently announced its winners of the 2002 ACC Outstanding Enlisted Aircrew of the Year awards. Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth Welborn, in flight suit and vest, a direct support operator with the 25th Intelligence Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., was named Senior NCO of the Year. Also pictured with Welborn are (l-r) Staff Sgt. Bill Carbaugh, Tech. Sgt. Tony Hodgson and Chief Master Sgt. Tom Davis, also from the 25th IS.*



*courtesy photo*

## Welcome to the "Mighty Eighth"

*The following people joined the Headquarters 8th Air Force team in April:*

- ♦ **Staff Sgt. Oliver Alcaraz**  
608th Combat Operations Squadron
- ♦ **Senior Airman Michelle Allen**  
608th Air Communications Squadron
- ♦ **Staff Sgt. Deborah Ebert**  
608th Combat Operations Squadron
- ♦ **Airman 1st Class Christopher Cardinale**  
608th Air Intelligence Squadron
- ♦ **Capt. David Williams**  
608th Combat Operations Squadron/TF-204
- ♦ **Capt. Heather Wyatt**  
8AF/CCE



# Female B-2 pilot makes history

● CAOC, from page 1



photo by Tech. Sgt. Richard Freeland  
Capt. Jennifer Wilson, a B-2 Spirit pilot, is the first female B-2 pilot to fly a combat mission.

**By Airman 1st Class Alice K. Moore**  
40th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (AFPN)** – Military women are continuing to knock down barriers and make history.

Capt. Jennifer Wilson, a B-2 Spirit pilot deployed with the 393rd Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, landed on the runway April 1 at her forward-deployed location, making her the first female B-2 pilot to fly a combat mission. "Flying is great," Wilson said. "I can't imagine doing anything else right now, and to be able to have a chance to fly in combat with the B-2 was an awesome experience."

Formerly a B-1 Lancer pilot, Operation Iraqi Freedom was not the first time she flew a combat mission, Wilson said. She also flew for Operation Allied Force in Kosovo, the first time the B-1s were involved in combat.

The 30-year-old Miami native received

her commission through the ROTC program at Georgia Technical Institute in June 1995. She attended undergraduate pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

After more than three years of flying the B-1, Wilson said she wanted to become a B-2 pilot.

"I wanted to have the opportunity to fly what I think is the most premier aircraft," Wilson said.

After a lengthy application and interview process, Wilson was accepted for the B-2 pilot training program in the fall of 2000. She became qualified in April 2002.

"My parents have always been there to encourage me in whatever it was that I wanted to do," Wilson said. "I owe a lot to my family for their support."

"For me, it's exciting to be a part of a chosen few," Wilson said. "I am lucky to be able to have the chance to do some-

thing that so few people will ever have the opportunity to do."

Wilson said she believes the B-2 training she and the airmen of the squadron received gave her the confidence to complete the recent combat sortie.

"I wasn't scared," Wilson said. "We've all trained quite a bit leading up to this operation. I knew I was going to be able to come through and get the job done."

After flying here, Wilson said she does not consider the mission a milestone. She said she feels thankful that she deployed with her squadron and the other airmen of the 40th Air Expeditionary Wing who are all working together toward the goal of securing freedom.

"It was just great coming off the plane and seeing the people who came to show me support," Wilson said. "From the maintainers to the operators, I was humbled to see them excited for me. We all work together to make the mission happen." 🇺🇸

ATO process we're making inputs.

"So if the launch and recovery site has weather problems and they're not going to be able to take off or land from the base, we'll recommend postponing a mission," said Fahlbusch. "Other situations include low ceilings, cloud decks and low visibility over the target area or an aerial refueling area filled with clouds, thunderstorms and ice; then we'll recommend the aircraft don't go there for safety reasons."

Weather events like icing, turbulence, high winds, major thunderstorms and sand storms can affect missions.

"When I was here during the first part of (Operation Enduring Freedom), the ground force insertion into Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan was delayed two days based on the weather call we made, because they would not have been able to get close air support (due to bad weather)," said Fahlbusch. "So the decision to delay was made by the theater commander, which probably saved some lives." 🇺🇸

**(Editor's Note:** This is the second in a series of articles on the inner workings of the CAOC located on a desert air base in Southwest Asia. The CAOC is the nerve center for all U.S. Central Command air component missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. With crews operating around the clock, the CAOC plans, monitors and directs search and rescue, theater missile defense, time-sensitive targeting, battlefield coordination, special operations support, sortie execution and other mission-critical operations.)

## Great story idea?

Don't keep it to yourself!

Call the Public Affairs office at

456-2156/2892,

or e-mail

MSgt. Rick DelaHaya at

richard.delahaya@barksdale.af.mil

Everyone's got a story to tell!

# AWACS keep flying despite challenges

By Tech. Sgt. Eric Grill

405th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

## OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

(AFP) — About 45 people deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., work together to make sure the E-3 Sentry, better known as the Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft or AWACS, is ready to launch within an hour if needed.

That is no small task, according to the man in charge of the maintenance of the AWACS aircraft at their deployed location.

Capt. James Hall, 405th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, is the person responsible for the upkeep of the AWACS and also the KC-135 Stratotankers and the B-1B Lancers here. The way to maintain the aircraft is to make sure his people are taken care of, he said. This includes making sure they have the right equipment to perform the job, as well as the right parts.

Hall said the AWACS maintenance team has a pretty impressive maintenance record with a more than 99 percent flying schedule effectiveness rate and a 98 percent mission effectiveness rate. The team also has the lowest abort rate caused by maintenance-related problems at about 3 percent.

"This shows you that the people doing their jobs are focused and motivated," Hall said. "If they weren't, our rates wouldn't be so impressive."

For Tech. Sgt. George Lull, an AWACS radar systems craftsman and a reservist called up to active duty to fight the global war on terrorism, the weather can challenge his work on the 6-foot-thick radar dome that sits on top of the airframe. High winds can prevent Lull from going into the radar dome, he said.

The radar dome houses a radar system that covers the air from the Earth's surface up into the stratosphere, over land or water. The radar has a range of more than 250 miles for low-flying targets and can detect, identify and track enemy and friendly low-flying aircraft by



*courtesy photo*

About 45 people deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., are working together at a forward-deployed location to ensure the E-3 Sentry, better known as the Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft or AWACS, is ready to launch within an hour if needed.

eliminating ground clutter returns that confuse other radar systems.

High winds can prevent Lull from going into the radar dome, he said.

Normal maintenance on the radar system can take up to 12 hours. If he's prevented from entering the radar dome, Lull said, it delays the maintenance schedule.

The extreme temperatures of desert operations also pose challenges, he said.

"When I have to hook up an air conditioning unit to the dome, it adds two hours to the maintenance schedule just to cool it off," Lull said. To compensate for the heat, dome maintenance is often performed at night.

As an AWACS crew chief, Senior Airman Jeremy Timmerman is responsible for performing any maintenance on the aircraft. This includes pre- and post-flight inspections and refueling the aircraft. He's been with the AWACS since August 2002. Before that he was a crew chief on the KC-135.

"A crew chief for a normal aircraft is a generalist in nature," Timmerman said.

"But with the AWACS there are a lot more systems and equipment to learn."

Hall said it takes every one of the 45 people here working together, doing different jobs, to put one AWACS in the air. "It's a very good team environment," he said.

"Because we're in a lean-manning situation, we have people here doing their primary jobs and assisting in other peoples' jobs to make sure the aircraft flies," Lull said.

One thing that makes life easier on the maintainers is the outstanding cooperation between the operators of the aircraft and the maintainers, Hall said.

"It's paramount that we have an open dialog with the aircraft operators to find out what is wrong with the aircraft," Hall said. "Without the dialog, we'd spend a lot more time troubleshooting the aircraft for problems, instead of fixing what is wrong with the aircraft. It saves us a lot of time."

"It's definitely a team effort that allows the aircraft to perform its critical mission," he said. 🇺🇸

# Local communities rally to support troops

*Patriotism  
displayed by  
ribbon sales  
benefit Operation  
Warmheart*

**By Tech. Sgt. James  
Brabenec**

*9th Reconnaissance Wing Public  
Affairs*

*"Land of the free, because  
of the brave. Support our  
troops."*

Signs such as this displayed the patriotic passion of about 100 people from area communities who selflessly turned out for a support-the-troops rally at the Main Gate on March 29.

As motorists drove on and off base, supporters shouted their approval, horns honked and American flags waved in the warm spring breeze.

Pastor Mike Jurna of the First Baptist Church of Olivehurst organized the rally. Jurna comes from a family of veterans including a brother who fought in Desert Storm.

"The intent of this rally is to give people an opportunity to show their support for Beale Air Force Base and U.S. troops fighting overseas," he said. "We appreciate and care for our veterans and what they are doing to keep our country free."

Kash Gill, chairman of the board for the Yuba/Sutter Chamber of Commerce, said patriotism is running high in the area, and with it, an



*photo by Tech. Sgt. James Brabenec*

*Local citizens gathered at the Beale Main Gate on Saturday to proclaim their patriotism and show their support for the troops.*

appreciation for Beale Air Force Base.

"Beale has been a part of our community for many years. As Air Force and other armed services men and women go overseas to fight for us, I realize, at times like this, I wish I could do more," said Gill.

Vicki Reed brought her daughter and three grandchildren out to Beale to encourage the troops.

"We can't fight, but we can show our support for the troops," she said.

Like many people decked out in patriotic colors, James Layton showed his support dressed in red, white and blue from head to toe and with a sign in one hand and an American flag in the other.

"I didn't serve in the military, but at times like this

I wish I had," he said. "I'll be out here every weekend showing my support."

The Yuba/Sutter chamber launched a campaign to turn that community support into a direct benefit for Beale families. The "Support the Troops" campaign features a red, white and blue ribbon for sale at \$5 each. All proceeds will go to Operation Warmheart. So far, response has been very enthusiastic. Many business people acted quickly and purchased 30 or more of the ribbons for their employees.


"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," said Gill. "We initially ordered eight dozen ribbons but sold out in the first hour."

Chief Master Sgt. Bill Thompson, 9th Reconnaissance Wing command chief,

called the community support for Team Beale "awesome."

"Our military members are working very hard on base and overseas in some very austere locations. So when you hear about the efforts the community is doing to support our Air Force members and recognize the sacrifices, separations and extraordinary efforts of the military, it really brings it home and makes it all worthwhile," he said.

The chamber received an additional 10 dozen ribbons Monday to meet the increasing demand. Chamber members will be contacting service organizations to promote and sell the ribbons throughout the communities.

"I hope we see everyone wearing one of these ribbons," said Gill. 

## Rivet Joint joins fight

**OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, Neb. (AFPN)**— Airman 1st Class Keith Keitel marshals out the first of two RC-135 Rivet Joint aircraft when airmen from the 38th and 343rd reconnaissance squadrons deployed overseas recently. The Rivet Joint reconnaissance aircraft provides near real-time on-scene intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination. Keitel is an aircraft maintenance technician here.



Photo by Capt. Beth Kelley

### Award Winners

**C**ongratulations to the following Headquarters 8th Air Force first quarter award winners:

- **Airman**

Senior Airman Christopher Bell  
608th Combat Operations Squadron

- **NCO**

Staff Sgt. Denette Tennell  
3rd Air Support Operations Group

- **Senior NCO**

Master Sgt. Timothy Justmann  
608th Air Support Squadron

- **Company Grade officer**

Capt. Edsel Wooten  
11th Air Support Operations Squadron

- **Civilian, GS-9 and above**

Leo Kowatch  
608th Combat Plans Squadron



photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Hannen

## RED HORSE construction

Air Force workers from the 819th and 219th Expeditionary Rapid Engineering Deployable Heavy Operation Repair Squadron Engineers units guide a K-span arch supported by a 60-ton crane into place while constructing a new transportation building. These RED HORSE engineers work 12-hour days, six days a week to build various structures for the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing at a forward-deployed Southwest Asia base.

# JSTARS team always training for battle

By Lanorris Askew

Warner Robins Air Logistics Center Public Affairs

**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. (AFPN)** — As military action continues in Iraq, coalition ground troops are in many ways counting on their guardian angels to guide the way.

Those guardians, crewmembers from the 116th Air Control Wing here, are always ready. They are armed with the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System.

Tech Sgt. Jim Anderson, an airborne intelligence instructor, said whether or not members of the 116th ACW deploy, they always train as if deployment was moments away.

Dozens of 116th ACW airmen sit poised and ready at operator workstations where they train on mission simulators to sharpen their skills. They also monitor ground movement to keep coalition troops one-step ahead of the game.

"JSTARS, as we speak, is performing a very important role in detecting enemy ground movement and then passing that information on to both forces on the ground and our other airborne assets so forces on the ground can be forewarned of possible surprise attacks," said Lt. Col. George Riebling, 128th Airborne Command and Control Squadron commander. "They can be given real-time information on enemy ground movements and support possible attacks."

Helping to make this possible is a crew of many.

Airman 1st Class Will Highsmith, a communications systems technician, said it is seldom he looks at the radar screen.

"What I do is monitor radios," he said. "I provide a service for the people who use the tactical employment of the weapon system. If someone in the back of the plane needs to talk to someone in another aircraft, I can change the radio frequency to allow that connection."

Highsmith also monitors emergency calls from aircraft in distress.



photo by Sue Sapp

*Maj. Michael Mras monitors activity captured by sensors on the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, or Joint STARS, reconnaissance aircraft. Mras is one of the 116th Air Control Wing airmen who detect enemy ground movement and relay the information to forces on the ground and other airborne assets.*

Without communications, receiving information from the jet is impossible, said Highsmith.

"You have voice communications and data communications," he said. "As far as data communications, it is very important to have data links ... up so we can get this information out to our combat commanders in the region and other aircraft so they know where the threats and targets are."

Maj. Michael Mras, sensor management officer, keeps his eyes on the radar.

"I monitor jobs that come in and juggle the different requirements and requests as they come in so the radar is not over-tasked at any one time," he said. "We want to make sure that everyone who has a requirement to see the ground picture gets what they need to do their job, both on and off the jet."

While flying in friendly airspace, JSTARS can look deep behind hostile borders to detect and track ground

movements. It has a range of more than 150 miles. Those capabilities make JSTARS effective for dealing with any contingency, whether actual or impending military aggression, international treaty verification or border violation.

First Lt. Mark Valdez also makes sure the troops get what they need. His job is to talk to the aircraft, aid in aircraft check-in and pass information from other members. He also assists in the surveillance aspect of missions. In that aspect, if there are no fighters in the air, he looks for tracks of movements to identify potential threats.

"There are a lot of things that we all do as a team to make the mission happen," he said.

There is no punch-in clock set to achieve the mission, said Valdez.

"Whatever needs to be done at any given time, even (if) it means working 24

● see JSTARS, page 14



photo by Senior Airman Christina M. Rumsey



photo by Airman 1st Class Stacia M. Willis

The "Mighty Eighth" has people deployed across the globe in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Here are just a few snapshots of our folks in action. Clockwise from left:

Staff Sgts. John Beldin (top) and Landon Favors from the 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., prepare an air-launched cruise missile for loading on a B-52. Beldin and Favors are deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam as part of the 7th Air Expeditionary Wing. Capt. Steven, a B-52 Stratofortress pilot from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., checks his night-vision equipment at a forward-deployed location supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. B-52 Stratofortress navigator Capt. Michelle Gillespie, 40th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, checks winds over the target area during a bombing mission in Iraq. Airman 1st Class Richard Ludlum prepares an MK-84 "dumb bomb" for transition to a GBU-31 Joint Direct Attack Munition "smart bomb." Ludlum is assigned to the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot AFB, N.D. Airman 1st Class Audrey Hughes, an air operations technician with the 116th Air Control Wing, said she is excited about her first deployment to a forward-operating location to support operations in Southwest Asia. Hughes is stationed at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., where the wing operates E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft.



photo by Sue Sapp



photo by Staff Sgt. Kristina Barrett



photo by Tech. Sgt. Richard Freeland

# B-52 dons new targeting upgrade system

By 2nd Lt. Tony Wickman

Air Force Flight Test Center Public Affairs

**EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AFPN)** – Aircrews flying the Air Force’s oldest aircraft can now better verify targets and pick them themselves thanks to experts integrating a targeting pod on the B-52 Stratofortress.

Maj. Keith Colmer, one of the original operational test pilots here for the Litening II targeting pod that was developed for fighters in 1990s, recently traveled to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., to fit it to the B-52. He called it no small order considering this was the first time a targeting pod has been installed on a B-52.

“The concept was to turn out a combat capability that wasn’t there before,” said Colmer. “It included integrating the targeting pod on the aircraft, conducting the test and evaluation and finally training the aircrews and maintainers on the use and care of the pod.”

Integrating the targeting pod, originally scheduled for June, was accelerated to improve the B-52’s ability to drop laser-guided munitions in operations around the world.

The B-52 community and Air Combat Command officials were interested in the Litening II pod for a couple of reasons, according to Colmer.

“One of the biggest reasons was target verification,” Colmer said. “Adding the targeting pod will allow B-52 crews to identify targets before releasing their munitions, preventing potential fratricides and improving combat effectiveness.”

B-52 crews currently use forward air controllers or predetermined coordinates to target objects. With human error possible in either case, Colmer said, the Litening II targeting pod will allow aircrews to look at what they are targeting before releasing their munitions.

According to Mo Kalhor, an engineer in the B-52 system program office engineer at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., the pod will greatly enhance the B-52’s capabilities.

“The Litening II pod provides the B-52 with ‘self-lasing’ capability for laser-guided



photo by Master Sgt. Rick DelaHaya

*Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander (left), and Col. Michael Reese, 8th Air Force Director of Staff (center), receive a briefing on the AGM-142 HAVE NAP display from Lt. Col. Bill Floyd, 93rd Bomb Squadron. The display is used in conjunction with the LITENING II pod and provides the B-52 the capability to pick and verify targets, as well as “self-lasing” capability.*

bomb deliveries, eliminating the need for other sources to ‘lase’ the target for them,” said Kalhor. “It will also allow for targets to be identified (and) verified and coordinates generated before delivering the numerous types of weapons the B-52 employs. It’s a tremendous capability for the aircraft.”

The other big reason for the push was to give the B-52 crews the capability to pick targets for themselves.

“ACC and the (people in the Central Command area of responsibility) wanted to know if a B-52 could use the Litening II to self-designate their own targets,” said Colmer. “They also wanted to see if the pod could derive coordinates for inertial-aided munitions like the joint direct attack munition.

“As you get better and better sensors, you are able to reduce target location error,” he said. “That was part of this test, to determine if the coordinates generated by the B-52 using the Litening II pod could reduce the TLE to something useable. Once you have that, you have the opportunity to target buildings, a tank or a truck.”

Kalhor said the pod will allow the B-52 to conduct battle damage assessment by recording video of munition drops, allowing experts to analyze how and where the bombs hit.

The test was an operational utility evaluation conducted by Air Reserve Command’s 93rd Bomb Squadron from Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Test Center in Tucson, Ariz. B-52 operational testers from the 49th Test and Evaluation Squadron at Barksdale AFB also participated in the test, providing aircraft instrumentation, data analysis and two weapons systems operators for the test and training.

“Without a doubt, having the capability to use advanced sensors as our ‘eyes’ for locating and identifying targets is enormous from the altitudes we operate,” said Lt. Col. William Floyd, 93rd Bomb Squadron radar navigator and test project manager. “We’ve seen, just recently in Operation Enduring Freedom, that all strike plat-

● see *LITENING*, page 13



photo by Master Sgt. Rick DeLaHaya

Maj. Paul Harper (left), 93rd Bomb Squadron, briefs Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, and Col. David Smith, 8th Air Force Air National Guard advisor, on the Litening II pod capabilities. The Litening II pod is a self contained, multi-sensor laser target designating and navigation system. It enables the radar navigator to detect, acquire, track and identify ground targets for highly accurate delivery on both conventional and precision-guided weapons.

#### ● LITENING, from page 12

forms require the capability to recognize and correct for target location errors, especially during real-time scenarios. We've been pushing this since 1998 when we learned the reserves were purchasing them for it F-16s."

According to Kalhor, the test included six sorties that took less than a month to accomplish, a major feat for the project.

"Some of the issues we had to deal with were funding, getting support from various organizations and receiving approval

from the appropriate agencies to conduct the test," said Kalhor. "Once the project started, we had some technical issues we overcame, including aircraft power availability for pod usage, conducting electromagnetic interference testing with a laser inside a hangar, etc."

The interesting thing about the test, said Colmer, was that the 93rd BS from Barksdale did most of the work on the test, but they are not normally testers.

"They called for experts to come out and verify their work," Colmer said. "Some of the things we looked at were integrating the pod onto the airframe, working out some software issues and training the crews to use the system."

The test team had to contend with continuous deployments of the crews from Barksdale, as real-world taskings came in for B-52 assets.

A positive aspect that helped testing was that none of the tactics used were different from those B-52 crews already use, Colmer said.

"Once they learned how to operate the pod to track the target and use the laser, they were able to visually identify the target and designate laser-guided weapons," said Colmer. "We didn't have to change how they flew or maneuvered the aircraft, which was great because when you're trying to conduct a rapid combat test, you try to change as little as possible."

While the 93rd Bomb Squadron was the lead squadron for testing the pod, the B-52 litening II program has been a complete total force effort. One of its biggest supporters is Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, commander of the active duty's 8th Air Force and the fleet of B-52s.

"Litening II has proven its worth on a number of aircraft in the Air Force inventory, and it just makes good sense to add this capability to the B-52," Carlson said. "It will help our crews positively identify and verify their targets, update target coordinates when necessary and minimize collateral damage while destroying targets." 🇺🇸

## Litening II pod used in combat mission

### OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

(AFPN) – For the first time in combat history, a B-52 Stratofortress used a Litening II targeting pod to strike targets at an airfield in northern Iraq on April 11, according to officials at the U.S. Central Command's combined air operations center.

Using the Litening II system, a crew of reservists from the 93rd Bomb Squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and active-duty airmen from the 23rd BS at Minot AFB, N.D., flew the bomber from a forward-deployed location and dropped one laser-guided GBU-12 Paveway II munition on a radar complex and another on a command complex at the airfield, officials said. 🇺🇸

### LITENING II Fact Sheet

LITENING II is a targeting pod integrated and mounted externally. The targeting pod contains a high-resolution, forward-looking infrared sensor (FLIR) that displays an infrared image of the target to the pilot; it has a wide field of view search capability and a narrow field of view acquisition/targeting capability of battlefield-sized targets.

The pod is equipped with a laser designator for precise delivery of laser-guided munitions, a laser rangefinder provides information for various avionics systems, for example, navigation updates, weapon deliveries and target updates.

#### General Characteristics

**Primary function:** Navigation and infrared/electro-optical targeting

**Prime contractor:** Northrop Grumman Corporation teamed with Rafael Corporation

**Length:** 87 inches (2.20 meters)

**Diameter:** 16 inches (0.406 meters)

**Weight:** 440 pounds

**Sensors:** Infrared detector, CCD-TV camera, laser rangefinder and laser designator

**Unit Cost:** \$1.4 million

# U-2 reconnaissance plane helps bring POWs home



photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Hannen

The pilot of a U-2 Dragon Lady like this one provided critical "situational awareness" to help Marines rescue seven prisoners of war in Iraq on April 13.

**By Capt. Roger Burdette**

Combined Forces Air Component Command  
Public Affairs

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (AFP)** —Seven U.S. Army soldiers who were formerly prisoners of war in Iraq are safe at a U.S. medical facility in Germany and are preparing to reunite with families. The reunion was possible not only because of the rescue operation by Marines but also because of assistance from an Air Force reconnaissance aircraft.

Air Force officials said that a U-2 Dragon Lady reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft provided critical "situational awareness" that allowed the Marines to safely and successfully recover the seven soldiers from north of Samarra, Iraq, approximately 100 miles north of Baghdad.

As reported widely in worldwide news coverage on April 13, Marines traveling in Iraq learned about the seven American POWs from Iraqi military officers who had deserted their unit.

Not reported or widely known, though, was that at the same time, a U-2 was already airborne over Iraq, performing an unrelated

reconnaissance mission.


While still airborne, the U-2 pilot communicated with both the Marines near Samarra and with officials at the Combined Air Operations Center at an air base in the Arabian Gulf Region.

Because the U-2 is able to fly at altitudes of up to 70,000 feet — more than 13 miles — it has "tremendous radio range," according to the pilot who flew the mission. His call sign is "Code."

At the U-2's altitude, Code was able to act as a sort of high-altitude information coordinator, monitoring radio transmissions and passing messages between key parties involved in the rescue who were otherwise out of each other's communication range.

Code, who has flown U-2s for two years and B-52 Stratofortresses and B-1 Lancers before that, deflected credit from himself and toward others.

"The pilot is integral to mission accomplishment, but the gist of the mission is accomplished on the ground by intelligence experts," Code said.

"My biggest challenge is to take off, make sure the jet is healthy, navigate and then land the beast." 


## • JSTARS, from page 10

hours a day, seven days a week, we make sure it gets done correctly and safely," said Valdez.

"It lets the people on the ground know what is coming," he said. "What we do is very critical to the warfighter because of the things we can see and the information we can provide to help commanders make those big decisions. I love it, I wouldn't trade the feeling I get from knowing I've saved lives for anything in the world."

Feedback from the field has been favorable, according to Riebling.

"When you hear comments like 'Thank God for JSTARS,' it makes you feel good to know our brothers in arms from the 116th ACW are doing their jobs, and doing (them) well."

Riebling said crewmembers left behind are going through initial qualification training. Wing instructors will continue to train to the best of their ability so when troops deploy, "they will be ready. Those deployed to theater are combat mission ready, and crewmembers have been through extensive training," he said. 

## Award Winners

**C**ongratulations to the following Headquarters 8th Air Force first quarter Information Manager award winners:

- **NCO**  
Tech. Sgt. Edward Paro  
608th Air Support Squadron
- **Senior NCO**  
Senior Master Sgt. (select)  
Jacqueline Brown  
608th Air Support Squadron

**C**ongratulations to 8th Air Force April's Airman of the Month:

- Airman 1st Class Daniel Endris  
26th Operational Weather Squadron



photo by Airman Alicia M. Sarkkinen

Capt. Gary Berger, a 23rd Bomb Squadron electronic warfare officer, is welcomed home from serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom by his son, Vaughn, and his daughter, Ava.

## Bomber group heads home

by Staff Sgt. Kristina Barrett

457th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (AFP)** — After dropping 3.2 million pounds of explosives and 9 million leaflets during 120 combat sorties, more than 1,000 airmen are packing up and going home from this forward-operating location.

The redeployment of the 457th Air Expeditionary Group began April 24 with approximately a dozen B-52 Stratofortress bombers leaving for Minot Air Force Base, N.D. The remaining airmen are closing up shop, preparing for the effort of getting people and equipment home.

"Our job here isn't finished even after the planes have left," said 1st Lt. Francisco Vega, the 457th AEG's munitions flight commander deployed from Minot. "We are ensuring we have accountability of all assets being sent

back, because our attention to detail of munitions doesn't end after the last expenditure."

After the bulk of the airmen leave, a small group of services, communications and transportation troops will remain to do the final contingency wrap-up.

"The communications squadron has to close down all of the deployed computers, ensure all computer equipment is accounted for and put everything into storage," said Airman 1st Class Vashti Pearson, the 57th AEG's communications squadron network administration technician deployed from Barksdale AFB, La. "In addition, the infrastruc-

ture needs to be removed. This includes local area network connections, routers and cabling associated with all of the computers on the base."

"As the base enters its redeployment phase, services will play several roles that will be vital to this base being prepared for future operations, as well as taking care of the troops right up to the moment they leave," said 1st Lt. Chris Radziewicz, 457th AEG services flight commander deployed from Minot. "Once the airmen leave, the dining hall staff will 'mothball' the facility, the 'porta-kabins' will have to be cleaned and all the furniture will be palletized and stored."

Radziewicz's team deployed here approximately three weeks before the main deployment, and they will remain here for another three weeks.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, B-52s flew airborne

alert, strategic attack, interdiction and psychological operations missions during more than 1,600 flying hours. They released more than 2,700 individual weapons and dropped 70 percent of all leaflets for the operation,

one of the largest in military history.

In addition, the Litening II pod was used for the first time in combat on a B-52 here (see page 13 for story). The pod allows the bomber to pick and chose targets

---

**"All of the parents back there should be proud of their sons and daughters for the job they did."**

---

--By Col. Dan Charchian  
457th AEG commander

in the battlefield, increasing the capability and effectiveness of the aircraft and the munitions.

"All of the parents back there should be proud of their sons and daughters for the job they did," said Col. Dan Charchian, 457th AEG commander. "It was truly an outstanding effort."